

METHODIST

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Abraham Lincoln and religion

Methodist

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



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<http://archive.org/details/abrahxx00linc>

Biblical Institute *New* **Declares Lincoln** *2/11/30* **Did Profess Faith**

EVANSTON, Ill., Feb. 11.—(U.P.) —Biographers who claim that Abraham Lincoln did not embrace the Christian faith are wrong, the Garrett Biblical Institute of Evanston declared today.

Historical proof is offered by the institute in the seminary's archives.

Documents indicate that Bishop Matthew Simpson, former president of Garrett, was a personal friend of Lincoln who gave the eulogy at the time of the Civil War President's burial at Springfield, Ill.

The seminary's findings stated that, while Lincoln did not join any church, yet, according to Bishop Simpson's sermon at the Emancipator's funeral, he was revealed as a lover of the Bible and its precepts.

"When I became President I did not love Him; when God took my son I was greatly impressed, but still I did not love Him; but when I stood upon the battlefield of Gettysburg I gave my heart to Christ, and I can now say that I do love the Savior," Lincoln is quoted in the seminary records as saying in reply to a minister's question.

information -
I believe I told you that I also have
this ~~Wm. Hughes~~ discharge as Body Guard of Lincoln
also four other names on the discharge paper -
signed by Andrew Johnson - President - Now I
have the Body Guard badge - a white ribbon -
black letters brass pin & felt fringe - reading
Lincoln's Body Guard - Union Light Guard - those three
words under bust picture of Lincoln - 7th Independent
Company - Ohio Vol. Cavalry - 1863-1865 -
I certainly would like to have been or to
be the possessor of the Huet because you so
generously presented to Elizabeth Tomlin. I have been
collecting key data for some time -

If you were really interested in having
the Lincolnia perhaps you have some good Kentucky
stems you might exchange? At any rate I have
no objection to your changing your mind and
taking it on. Think what a valuable article
it would be to our organization with the name
you have. But if any one - individual or -



• Otherwise compared to the possessions
friends - I am sure I should pass out of shock!
Depression is all on hand. I had hoped
Indiana was better - convalescing as it

more. Hoping that the copy enclosed
may throw some light on the certificate -

I am In Sincerely

Broderick M. Hansen
Mrs. J. Henry Hansen
1314 Brown Hotel
Sincerely

Monday Evening
the sixteenth '33

My dear Mr. Warren:- Thank you for your prompt
reply - but I regret your inability to take in the
Lincoln certificate - As you say you would be interested
to have one or two things I have made a very poor
copy of the appendix accompanying the certificate -
But there is no signature of Lincoln in the
certificate of membership - nor can I imagine any
reason why there should have been -

As I told you before I wrote to
the Board of Foreign Missions of the M. E. Church
at 150 Fifth Ave. N. Y. - While I only wrote to them
relative to its purchase - I received a very interesting
letter from them - explaining that this certificate had
in all probability been given to Lincoln as was -
is so often done for a person of prominence - The
contentment by seeing there was a doubt no doubt
of its authenticity & regretted very greatly that they
were not in a position to take it in - Also
stating that they had had several inquiries in regard
to it - & took it to mean that it might be from people
trying to locate it - I fear I have inadvertently destroyed
this gentleman's letter - but as I have the address I shall
write him again - thanking him for the voluntary -

C 9

Manuscripts

Body General

ms

January 24, 1933

Mrs. J. Henry Heuser
1314 Brown Hotel
Louisville, Kentucky

My dear Madam:

Thank you very much for the further information
which you have sent relating to the Lincoln items.

If you will be willing to place a price upon these
mementos, we will advise you whether or not we are interested.

If you will give us more in detail about your
interests in Kentuckiana, it may be possible for us to make
some exchange that will be of benefit to us both.

Very sincerely yours,

LAW:LH

Director
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

Apparatus

State of Ohio —
Clark County ss.

Wm H Hughes, who being first duly sworn deposes and says that he is a resident of Springfield Ohio - now residing at 304 West Cecil Street of said City —

Apparatus further states that he is the son of Wm Henry Hughes - now deceased. He says that his father was one of the Body Guards of Abraham Lincoln President of the United States. He says his father received from some one at the White House a steel engraving showing the President's official turban in the Methodist Episcopal Missionary Society. He says the certificate is authentic. He says that he was the owner until recently of the certificate - when he sold the same to one O.B. Roberts of Springfield, Ohio. He said O.B. Roberts then sold the said certificate to one Ray Royatt - of Springfield, Mo. - Further this apparatus saith not.

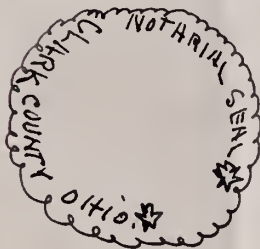
Signed - Wm H. Hughes.

Sworn to before me & subscribed in my presence
This 2nd day of December A.D. 1930 —

Stanford O'Hara
(STANFORD L. O'HARRA)

Notary Public
Clark County Ohio -

Commission Expires
2-26-32





The Brown Hotel

ON DIXIE HIGHWAY AND MIDLAND TRAIL
BROADWAY AT FOURTH AVE.

GARAGE IN CONNECTION

Louisville, Ky.



HAROLD E. HARTER,
MANAGER

February 6, 1933

Mrs. J. H. Heuser
1314 Brown Hotel
Louisville, Kentucky

My dear Madam:

I have been interested in your letter and note your willingness to dispose of the Lincoln items and the price you have placed upon them.

We should be very glad to make note of this and while we would not care to secure them ourselves, possibly we might direct someone to you who would like to have these items.

We do not acquire anything here at this library except exclusively Lincoln items.

Possibly you might write to the State Historical Society at Indianapolis, about your Governor Jennings curio, as they might be interested.

Thank you very much for calling to my attention these items which you have.

Very sincerely yours,

LAW:EB

Director
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

MRS. J. HENRY HEUSER
BROWN HOTEL

My dear Mr. Warren:- Or should I say "Mr." -
but somehow I have gotten the idea that you
are a physician. I, myself, have, shall
I say, the misfortune, to be the wife of a
Doctor - after all it has its compensations!

Now I am going to tell you what I
want for the Lincoln material. - I want one
hundred dollars for all of it - The certificate,
the badge - the discharge paper signed by
Andrew Johnson as Pres. - and of course it is
all accompanied by the appendant. - I am
sure it is worth more - but living, as I do, in
a hotel, I have no place to use it. So I prefer
passing it on to an appropriate setting, if
possible. - While I have not written him,
I understood there is a collector of Lincoln
in Lexington & that he had expressed a
desire for it before it was worn by me.
You ask me what it
is I want in return - I should

Say almost anything that is not common place -
by that I mean - too easy to obtain -

I shall be very glad
to do some exchanging with you - if you have
something and will indicate what you
have. - One thing I am very anxious
to get is an early colored picture of Lincoln.

Are you interested in anything pertaining
to Indiana - I saw Lincoln matter - I see I
have apparently made Lincoln an Indian -
but you understand my meaning I am sure -

What I am trying to ask would
you be interested in an old ink stand having belonged
to your first Governor, Jennings I believe? It is
a very interesting one - I saw where it is - I
also saw that it can be obtained a little later -
The owners are at present away from home -
I shall be very glad to

Learn from you - soon
In Sincere
Dorville M. Hansen

Nov. 31st 1933 -

Mrs. J. Henry Hansen
1314 Room Hotel
Lincoln.

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 476

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

May 23, 1938

THE LINCOLNS AND THE METHODIST CLERGY

Carlisle once said, "The religion of a man is the chief fact concerning him." If this be true it is quite important to observe the contacts of the Lincoln family with ministers of various faiths. The Methodist Church presents an interesting and impressive group of clergymen who greatly influenced Lincoln directly and indirectly; Benjamin Ogden, Jesse Head, George L. Rogers, Peter Cartright, and Matthew Simpson.

Jesse Head

In the community where Thomas Lincoln grew to manhood and where Nancy Hanks was living in the home of her Uncle Richard Berry, there also resided a preacher of the Methodist faith by the name of Jesse Head. He was born in Frederick County, Maryland, on June 10, 1768, and as early as 1797 he had arrived in Kentucky.

The Washington County Court on February 7, 1803, authorized him to "solemnize the rites of matrimony" and three years later on June 12, he served as officiating clergyman at the wedding of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, two young people whom he had known personally for many years. The duly recorded certificate of the marriage he performed for the future parents of Abraham Lincoln may be observed in the clerk's office of the Washington County, Kentucky, courthouse.

Benjamin Ogden

"The First Western Cavalier" is the title given to Benjamin Ogden by Redford, a Methodist historian of note who wrote, "His name was the synonym of courage and suffering. He had alone traversed the wilds, swum its rivers and encountered difficulty and danger." In 1786, at the age of twenty-two, Ogden was the only preacher in Kentucky named in the minutes of the Methodist Church.

After Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married by Jesse Head in Washington County they moved immediately to Elizabethtown where Thomas Lincoln had already been closely associated with Ben Ogden who had been living in Elizabethtown for many years. Like most of the early ministers, he supplemented his religious work with manual labor. Ogden followed the occupation of cabinet maker. Thomas Lincoln was closely associated with him as their names appear together on many documents. As early as the year 1800, Ogden was in Elizabethtown and for the next few years joined more young people in matrimony than any of the ministers in the county. On March 13, 1806, he

officiated at the wedding of Daniel Johnston and Sarah Bush. Sarah Bush Johnston later became the step-mother of Abraham Lincoln.

George L. Rogers

The marriage of Thomas Lincoln to his second wife, the widow Sarah Bush Johnston, was solemnized on December 2, 1819, in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, by Rev. George L. Rogers. It is important to note that on both occasions when a marriage was anticipated by Sarah, she sought out a Methodist clergyman to perform the ceremony, indicating that she was closely associated with this church body if not affiliated with it.

Rogers was born in Farquier County, Virginia, on April 30, 1793. After migrating to Kentucky he was ordained a Deacon by Marcus Lindsey and an elder by Bishop Soule. He produced credentials of his ordination on February 2, 1819, which gave him the authority to "celebrate the rites of matrimony" and that same year officiated at the Lincoln-Johnston wedding. Rogers was termed a local preacher and followed the trade of wheelwright and chair maker. He lived to be ninety-nine years of age.

Peter Cartright

No name among Lincoln's early political opponents has become more familiar than that of Peter Cartright. He was probably known to Lincoln's father and mother as he preached for a while in Washington County, Kentucky in 1805, as is evident from this record which appears on the county order book of that year.

"On the motion of Peter Cartright, a minister of the gospel of the Methodist Church, he having made oath and with Samuel Potter and Jesse Head, his security executed and acknowledged bond as the law directs a testimonial is granted him to solemnize the rites of marriage."

Lincoln first encountered the Methodist circuit rider when they were both candidates for the Legislature from Sangamon County in 1832. This time Cartright was one of the four successful candidates while Lincoln failed to place among the four men to be elected. It was in 1846, however, when the real battle for political supremacy was waged between Lincoln and Cartright, this time Lincoln being the successful candidate. This interesting contest has been kept alive in the memories of the people by the traditional story which claims that during the Congressional race Lincoln attended a religious meeting in which Cartright, the minister, asked how

many wanted to go to heaven. Lincoln not replying in the affirmative, Cartright asked him where he wanted to go. "To Congress," Lincoln answered.

Methodist Ministers Committee

While Lincoln was personally acquainted with several Methodist clergymen he was on one occasion visited by a committee of Methodist ministers from a conference assembled in Philadelphia. To their address of assurance of the unfaltering support of Methodists, Lincoln replied:

"Gentlemen.

"In response to your address, allow me to attest the accuracy of its historical statements; indorse the sentiments it expresses; and thank you, in the nation's name for the sure promise it gives.

"Nobly sustained as the government has been by all the churches, I would utter nothing which might, in the least, appear invidious against any. Yet, without this, it may fairly be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church, not less devoted than the best, is by its greater numbers, the most important of all. It is no fault in others that the Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospital, and more prayers to Heaven than any. God bless the Methodist Church—bless all the churches—and blessed be God, who, in this our great trial, giveth us the churches.

"A. Lincoln"

Matthew Simpson

The most distinguished of all the Methodist clergymen with whom Lincoln came in contact was Bishop Simpson. His acquaintance with the President began in Illinois and he was a frequent visitor at the White House during the war. On occasions Bishop Simpson was called into conferences with the President and at the opening of the Sanitary Fair in Philadelphia, President Lincoln requested that the Bishop represent him and give the opening address.

Bishop Simpson delivered the closing eulogy of a long series of tributes which had been paid to the departed Lincoln. He seems to have been selected for this office as America's outstanding clergyman who was closely associated with the President. The closing words of Bishop Simpson's funeral oration over the body of Lincoln follow:

"We crown thee as our martyr, and Humanity enthrones thee as her triumphant son. Hero, martyr, friend, farewell."



(Photo by Wide World)

SHEDS LIGHT ON LINCOLN'S RELIGIOUS SIDE—Document made public by William H. Townsend of Lexington, Ky., states that Abraham Lincoln was made a life director of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church shortly before he died.

Document Revealed Lincoln Joined Religious Organization

By J. R. ANDERSON

LEXINGTON, Ky., Feb. 11 (Wide World)—Abraham Lincoln became a member of a religious organization shortly before his death, says William H. Townsend, Lincoln historian.

Shedding new light on this long discussed phase of Lincoln's career, Townsend made public a document

stating that Lincoln was made a life director of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1863, about two years before he was assassinated.

"This certificate of membership," Townsend said, "constitutes the only actual affiliation between Abraham Lincoln and any church organization. Until its discovery, all biographers had agreed Lincoln had never joined any church or religious organization."

Townsend, Lexington attorney and author of several books about Lincoln, said he acquired the record several years ago from an attic in a Springfield, O., home of a union soldier.

The certificate says:

"This certifies that His Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, Pres. of U.S.A., is constituted a life director of the missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal Church by the payment of one hundred and fifty dollars."

It bears the signatures: "E. S. Janes, president" and "David Terry, secretary." It is not dated.

Townsend said he confirmed the affiliation in the yearly reports of the Missionary Society, published in 1864 for activities of the previous year. In this report, he said, is a notation that Lincoln contributed \$150 to the group and was made a life director.

Later, Lincoln was elevated to a life manager of the society, Townsend said.

He obtained the certificate from the family of the later William H. Hughes, who was a member of the 7th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, also known as the Union Light Guard. This unit was organized in 1863 by 100 men and was assigned to guard the President and the White House.

Hughes, a corporal, had charge of detail stationed much of the time in the executive mansion, beginning in 1864. After Lincoln's death Mrs. Lincoln gave him the framed certificate.

Historian Declares Lincoln Was Church Society Member

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Hughes, a corporal, had charge of a detail stationed much of the time in the executive mansion, beginning in 1864. After Lincoln's death, Townsend related, Hughes asked Mrs. Lincoln for a memento of the President and she gave him the framed certificate.

On the basis of much research, Townsend said he believes Lincoln joined the missionary society "one evening in 1863 after hearing Bishop Matthew Simpson preach in Foundry Church in Washington." (Bishop Smith delivered the oration at Lincoln's funeral in Springfield, Ill.)

"Companions of Lincoln's early manhood have recorded that he was an infidel or skeptic," the attorney said, but expressed the opinion this was due largely to the fact that among the first books Lincoln read was one written by the noted nonbeliever, Thomas Paine.

"The Rev. Peter Cartwright, whom Lincoln defeated for congress in 1846, probably did more than any other man to publicize the fact that 'Abe' at that time was not a church member. In fact, old Peter Cartwright made this fact one of his main campaign arguments."

Townsend believes the Rev. James Smith, a native of Lincoln's home state of Kentucky, had much to do with any change of Lincoln's outlook on religion.

"Lincoln never attended religious services with any regularity or show of interest until the death of his son, Eddie, February 1, 1850. The Rev. Mr. Smith, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Ill., preached the funeral, and thereafter Lincoln rented a pew in Smith's church."

"At any rate, this missionary society certificate is documentary proof that Lincoln not only had a definite affiliation with a religious organization, but that he also generously subscribed funds toward its maintenance."

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1942

Tells How Lincoln Joined Church Unit

By J. R. ANDERSON

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FOUND IN ATTIC

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The certificate says:

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director of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church by the payment of one hundred and fifty dollars."

BEARS SIGNATURES

It bears the signatures: E. S. Janes, president and "David Terry, secretary." It is not dated.

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ARTHRITIS

MOUNTAIN VALLEY MINERAL WATER

Bottled at Hot Springs, Ark.

May be used freely—non-irritating, mildly alkaline, this palatable health water helps eliminate harmful toxins and tends to alleviate pains and aches. Just phone SAR. 3081 for a case today.

Free Interesting Booklet On Request

116 S. CALVERT ST. SAR. 3081

Lexington Man Offers Proof That Lincoln Was Member Of Religious Organization

BY J. R. ANDERSON.

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The certificate says:

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Townsend said he confirmed the affiliation in the yearly reports of the Missionary Society, published in 1864, for activities of the previous year. In this report is a notation that Lincoln contributed \$150 to the group, and was made a Director.

Later, Lincoln was elevated to a life manager of the society, Townsend said. He obtained the certificate from the family of the late William H. Hughes, who was a member of the Seventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, also known as the Union Light Guard. This unit was organized in 1863 by 100 men, and was assigned to guard the President and the White House.

Hughes, a Corporal, had charge of a detail stationed much of the time in the Executive Mansion, beginning in 1864. After Lincoln's death, Townsend related, Hughes asked Mrs. Lincoln for a memento

of the President, and she gave the framed certificate to him.

On the basis of much research, Townsend said he believes Lincoln joined the missionary society "one evening in 1863 after hearing Bishop Matthew Simpson preach in Foundry Church in Washington." (Bishop Smith delivered the oration at Lincoln's funeral in Springfield, Ill.)

Before this Methodist affiliation, Townsend continued, Lincoln had attended the Presbyterian church. This was the faith of Mrs. Lincoln.

"Companions of Lincoln's early manhood have recorded that he was an infidel or skeptic," the attorney said, but expressed the opinion that this was due largely to the fact that among the first books Lincoln read was one written by the noted non-believer, Thomas Paine.

"The Rev. Peter Cartwright, whom Lincoln defeated for Congress in 1846, probably did more than any other man to publicize the fact that 'Abe' at that time was not a church member. In fact, old Peter Cartwright made this fact one of his main campaign arguments."

Townsend believes Rev. James Smith, a native of Lincoln's home state of Kentucky, had much to do

Historian Unearths Document Proving Lincoln No Infidel

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Townsend Author of Books

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Confirms Affiliation

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Hughes Guarded White House

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Believed An Infidel

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Rented Church Pew

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Offers document to prove that Lincoln joined religious group

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Guarded White House.

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Historian Says Lincoln Joined Church

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WHITE HOUSE GUARD

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Lincoln Religious Affiliation Discovered; President Was Life Director of Missionary Society of Methodist Episcopal Church

BY J. R. ANDERSON

Lexington, Ky., Feb. 11.—Wide World)—Abraham Lincoln became a member of a religious organization before his death, says William H. Townsend, Lincoln historian.

Shedding new light on this long discussed phase of Lincoln's career, Townsend made public a document stating that Lincoln was made a life director of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1863, about two years before he was assassinated.

"This certificate of membership," Townsend said, "constitutes the only actual affiliation between

Abraham Lincoln and any church organization. Until its discovery, all biographers had agreed Lincoln had never joined any church or religious organization."

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The certificate says:

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the payment of one hundred and fifty dollars."

It bears the signatures: "E. S. Janes, president" and "David Terry, secretary." It is not dated.

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*Copy to [unclear]
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2/11/12*

SHEDS NEW LIGHT ON LINCOLN LIFE

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AFFILIATION VERIFIED

Townsend said he confirmed the affiliation in the yearly reports of the Missionary Society, published in 1864 for activities of the previous year. In this report, he said, is a notation that Lincoln contributed \$150 to the group and was made a life director.

Later, Lincoln was elevated to a life manager of the society, Townsend said.

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HOW HE JOINED

On the basis of much research, Townsend said he believes Lincoln joined the Missionary Society "one evening in 1863 after hearing Bishop Matthew Simpson preach in Foundry Church in Washington." (Bishop

Smith delivered the oration at Lincoln's funeral in Springfield, Ill.)

Prior to this Methodist affiliation, Townsend continued, Lincoln had attended the Presbyterian Church. This was the faith of Mrs. Lincoln.

"Companions of Lincoln's early manhood have recorded that he was an infidel or skeptic," the attorney said, but expressed the opinion this was due largely to the fact that among the first books Lincoln read was one written by the noted non-believer, Thomas Paine.

"The Rev. Peter Cartwright, whom Lincoln defeated for Congress in 1846, probably did more than any other man to publicize the fact that 'Abe' at that time was not a church member. In fact, old Peter Cartwright made this fact one of his main campaign arguments."

Townsend believes the Rev. James Smith, a native of Lincoln's home State of Kentucky, had much to do with any change of Lincoln's outlook on religion.

Volunteers for

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Finds Paper Showing Lincoln a Methodist

(Wide World News Service.)

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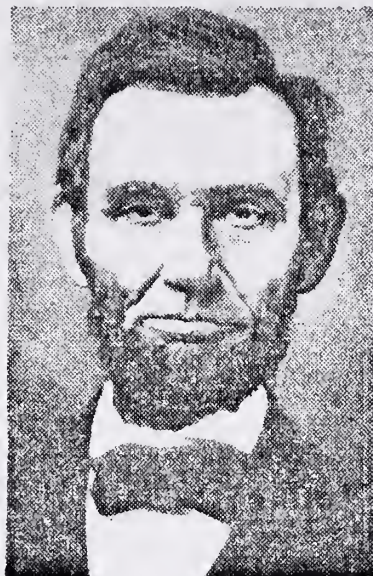
[The Encyclopedia Britannica says, regarding Lincoln's own attitude toward religion, as expressed by him late in life:

"I have never united myself to any church, because I have found difficulty in giving my assent, without mental reservations, to the long complicated statements of Christian doctrine which characterize their Articles of Belief and Confessions of Faith."]

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Abraham Lincoln.
Did He Join Church in '63?

Guarded President.

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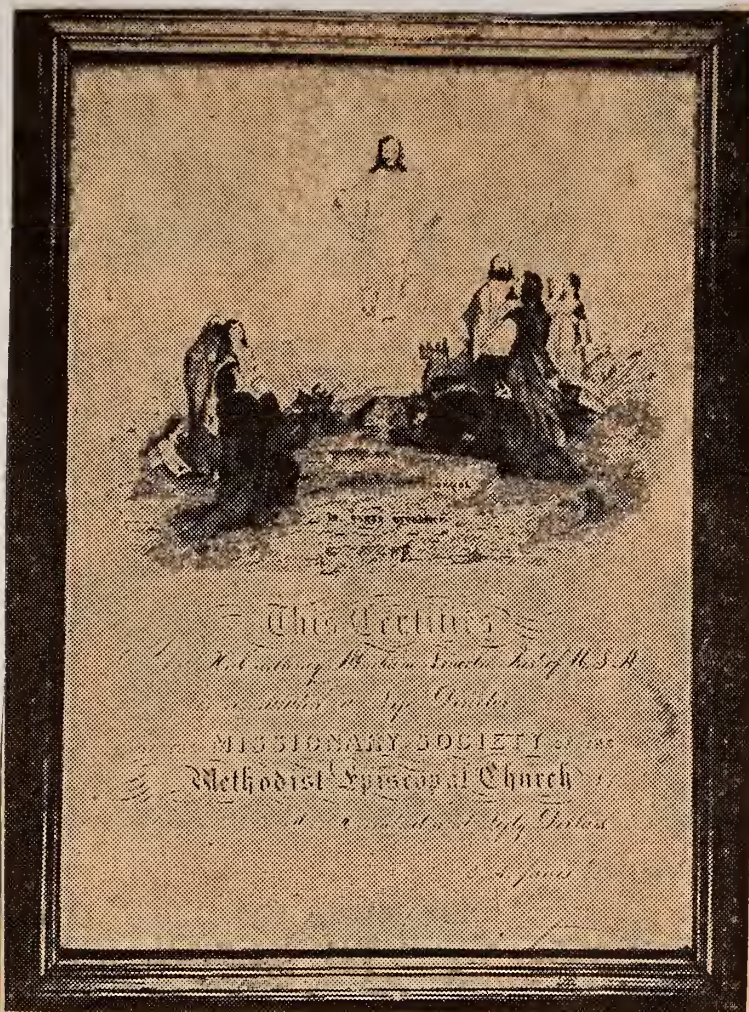
Townsend believes the Rev. James Smith, a native of Lincoln's home state of Kentucky, had much to do with any change of Lincoln's outlook on religion.

"Lincoln never attended religious services with any regularity or show of interest until the death of his son, Eddie, on Feb. 1, 1850. Mr. Smith, pastor of the First Presbyterian church in Springfield, Ill., preached the funeral. Thereafter Lincoln rented a pew in Smith's church.

"At any rate, this missionary society certificate is documentary proof that Lincoln not only had a definite affiliation with a religious organization, but that he also generously subscribed funds toward its maintenance."

LAUNCH CRUISER TODAY.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (P) — The navy Wednesday announced the cruiser U. S. S. Montpelier would be launched today at Camden, N. J.



THIS DOCUMENT, WHICH HAS BEEN MADE PUBLIC by William H. Townsend, Lexington (Ky.) attorney and author of books on Abraham Lincoln, states that Lincoln was made a life director of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1863, about two years before his death. Townsend said he acquired the record several years ago from an attic in a Springfield (O.) home of a Union soldier. Until its discovery, Townsend said, all biographers had agreed Lincoln never joined any church or religious organization. (Wide World.)

EDWARD M. PALLETTE, M.D.
1930 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

March 12, 1941

Dr. Louis Warren
% Lincoln Life Insurance Company
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Dr. Warren:

The Kinsman and Lincoln Lore are coming in regularly. Thank you.

At the time that you addressed the Lincoln Fellowship here a month or two ago, you told me of some Lincoln-Cartwright contact which I did not get and which I have somewhat forgotten. I think it had something to do with Cartwright's name appearing on some Lincoln paper. I wonder if you would send me a note of this.

Peter Cartwright was my great-grandfather and for some time I have been interested in his contacts, with Lincoln. In 1804 and again in 1809, Peter was circuit rider on the Salt River Circuit which included Lincoln's birthplace. In your book on Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood, which I do not have by me at the present moment, you discuss the Lincoln family church connections in Kentucky and mention claims have been made of Methodist influences at that time. I wonder if you have any of the references of these claims. If you do, I would be very glad to have them. Also, I wonder where I could find anything in regard to the very early history of Methodism in the neighborhood of Elizabethtown. Of course I do not believe either Lincoln or his family was



EDWARD M. PALLETTE, M.D.
1930 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

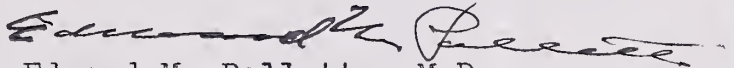
Dr. Louis Warren - 2 - March 12, 1941

greatly influenced by the Methodists, but
at the same time it is interesting.

I have your book on Lincoln's Parentage
and Childhood. What other of your books are
on sale? Have you any there?

Thanking you very much for any help
along these lines, I am

Cordially yours,


Edward M. Pallette, M.D.

EMP:VB

April 4, 1941

Dr. Edward M. Pallette
1930 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Dr. Pallette:

I just arrived in the office yesterday from the Western itinerary and find your letter of inquiry with respect to the Methodist influences in Kentucky.

Enclosed you will please find a back number of the Lincoln Lore which discusses Lincoln and the Methodist Clergy, in which you will find a reference to the Peter Cartwright note which I discovered in the Washington County records.

Redford is the best known Methodist Historian for early Kentucky days and his three volume work on Methodism in Kentucky is an authority in the field. He also published Life and Times of H.H. Kavanaugh and another book called Western Cavaliers.

I think all three of these titles are out of print, but I am sure you can run across them at your local second-hand book stores.

There was a little history of Methodism in Elizabethtown written by Mrs. Lucinda Helm and although I am sure we have it I cannot seem to find it just now but when it appears I will advise you. Possibly you can find one also in Los Angeles as I am sure I saw one on this last trip in a second-hand book store there,

We are pleased, indeed, that you enjoy receiving Lincoln Lore.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB
Enc.

Director

April 1, 1941

Mr. Robert H. Jackson
1200 Wisconsin Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Jackson:

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and I am sure that you are thinking of me. I am sure that you are thinking of me.

I am sure that you are thinking of me. I am sure that you are thinking of me. I am sure that you are thinking of me.

I am sure that you are thinking of me. I am sure that you are thinking of me. I am sure that you are thinking of me.

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Very truly yours,

Robert H. Jackson

Robert H. Jackson

Journal and Year Book

EIGHTH SESSION

Illinois Conference

OF THE

METHODIST CHURCH

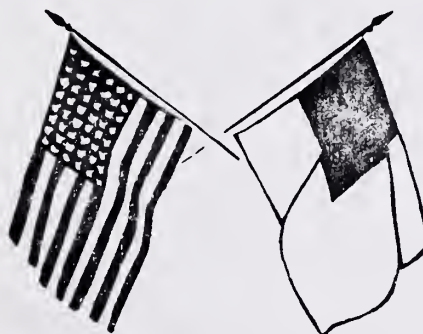
(Organized Methodism in the State of Illinois dates back to 1824
(122) years when the Illinois Conference of the Methodist
Episcopal Church was organized)

Jacksonville, Illinois, June 12-16, 1946

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Published by
The Commission on Publication of the Conference
Journal and Year Book

J. Fred Melvin, Chairman
J. Dewey Muir Charles B. Wagner E. H. Sauer
B. L. Weaver H. G. Nylin



Huston-Patterson Corporation
Decatur, Illinois

1946

No other minister in the Western Church could equal him in the pulpit, at least; and in the East only the renowned Stephen Olmi was of his elevation. The fame of his pulpit oratory became legendary in Methodist circles and beyond. He was massive, majestic, in physical as well as in intellectual and moral stature. Bishop Ames said of his preaching: 'It reminds me of Ajax throwing rocks no other man could lift.' Of great native intelligence, well educated, scholarly by inclination and habit, a close student especially of Biblical history and literature, he early took rank as one of the first minds of the Church in history."

Undoubtedly the best comparison of the two Peters that we have is that by G. R. S. McElfresh, himself a distinguished member of the Illinois Conference who knew intimately both Cartwright and Akers. This is what he said: "Cartwright was the great organizer; Akers, the greater preacher; Cartwright, a man of affairs; Akers, a man of books; Cartwright had superior force; Akers, superior dignity. If Cartwright was a surging Niagara of restless activity and force, Akers was a Mont Blanc towering up in moral influence—stately, serene, and grand." Milburn said of Akers, "His majesty of mien and spirit would have been oppressive but for the fascination you find in his childlike openness and purity. No other man's invariable sanctity ever affected me as did his through our intimacy of many years."

In 1837 Akers preached a sermon near Springfield which was attended by a group of lawyers and politicians from the Capitol. In his sermon Akers attacked the evils of slavery and predicted a civil war in the decade 1860-1870. Lincoln was present and was deeply affected by the sermon. He declared, "It was the most impressive sermon I ever heard. I believe it and wonder that God should have given such power to a man. The most wonderful thing to me was that somehow I became strangely mixed up with it." Later in his life, Peter Akers was presented with a cane to commemorate this occasion by a group of his fellow-ministers. This cane is still in the possession of the Akers family.

Peter Cartwright was twelve times delegate to the General Conference; Akers, six times. At one time he lacked only one vote of being made a bishop and the slightest effort on his part would have made his election sure. However, this effort he would not make.

Akers was three times president of McKendree College. Succeeding Peter Cartwright, who was the first president of the Board of Trustees of the Illinois Conference Female Academy but who remained in office only six months, Peter Akers was president for eight years. He was the founder and first president of the Ebenezer Manual Labor School which makes the claim of having been the first Methodist Theological Seminary in the United States.

The only other giant of the Illinois Conference in the early days, who was directly connected with the founding of MacMurray College, was its first president, James Frazier Jaquess. Unlike Milburn, Cartwright, and Akers, who were born in Kentucky, Jaquess was a native of the Middle West, having been born in 1819 in Posey County, Indiana. Like Milburn and Akers, he was well educated, having received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Indiana Asbury University (now DePauw) and the Master of Arts degree from McKendree College; and like Akers, he studied law and was admitted to the bar, but, just on the threshold of his legal career, he also felt the call to preach and entered the Methodist ministry.

At the time he was elected president of the Female Academy, he was only twenty-nine, but he had been the eminently successful pastor of the First Methodist Church in Springfield. He was a popular preacher and a great revivalist, although he had had little experience as a circuit rider.

Jaquess was president of the Female Seminary for seven years. Under his presidency, the Seminary prospered rapidly, increasing its enrollment and becoming well housed in a beautiful and substantial new building. In 1855 he left the Female College, as it was then known, to become the president of Chaddock College in Quincy.

He was an intimate friend of Governor Richard Yates and President Lincoln. At the outset of the Civil War, he raised a regiment of soldiers, became its colonel, and saw much active service, particularly in the battles around Chattanooga. At Chickamauga two horses were shot under him and he was seriously wounded. In 1864 he was entrusted by President Lincoln with an important diplomatic mission to Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy. He obtained from President Davis a statement of the war aims of the South. After the war, he was with the Freedmen's Aid Bureau in the South and from 1876 until his death in 1898, he was engaged in business.

He refused to take a pension from the government until the last year of his life. This is what he said about it: "My grandfathers were Revolutionary soldiers and you could get up a row if you mentioned pensions. My father and my uncles were in the War of 1812 and would take none. I had hoped not to receive one—but I am unable now to do anything, and it has been my desire, and not the fault of the government, that I have never received a pension."

There is incontrovertible evidence that Abraham Lincoln was profoundly affected by, if not converted under, the preaching of Colonel Jaquess. In an address delivered at the Eleventh Annual Reunion of the Survivors of his regiment, the seventy-third Illinois Infantry Volunteers, Colonel Jaquess said:

"The mention of Mr. Lincoln's name recalls to my mind an occurrence that perhaps I ought to mention. . . . I happen to know something on that subject (that is, Mr. Lincoln's religious sentiments) that very few persons know. My wife, who has been dead nearly two years, was the only witness of what I am going to state to you as having occurred. . . . I was standing at the parsonage door one Sunday morning, a beautiful morning in May, when a little boy came up to me and said: 'Mr. Lincoln sent me around to see if you was going to preach today.' Now, I had met Mr. Lincoln, but I never thought any more of Abe Lincoln than I did of any one else. I said to the boy: 'You go back and tell Mr. Lincoln that if he will come to church he will see whether I am going to preach or not.' The little fellow stood working his fingers and finally said: 'Mr. Lincoln told me he would give me a quarter if I would find out whether you are going to preach.' I did not want to rob the little fellow of his income, so I told him to tell Mr. Lincoln that I was going to try to preach . . .

"The church was filled that morning. It was a good sized church, but on that day all the seats were filled. I had chosen for my text the words: 'Ye must be born again,' and during the course of my sermon I laid particular stress on the word 'must.' Mr. Lincoln came into the church after the services had commenced, and there being no vacant seats, chairs were put in the altar in front of the pulpit and Mr. Lincoln and Governor French and wife sat in the altar during the entire service, Mr. Lincoln on my left and Governor French on my right, and I noticed that Mr. Lincoln appeared to be deeply interested in the sermon. A few days after that Sunday Mr. Lincoln called on me and informed me that he had been greatly impressed with my remarks on Sunday and that he had come to talk with me further on the matter. I invited him in, and my wife and I talked and prayed with him for hours. Now, I have seen many persons converted; I have seen hundreds brought to Christ, and if ever a person was converted, Abraham Lincoln was converted that night in my house. His wife was a Presbyterian, but from remarks he made to me he could not accept Calvinism. He never joined my church, but I will always believe that since that night Abraham Lincoln lived and died a Christian gentleman." This statement of Colonel Jaquess is recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of the Reunion.

Time fails to speak of other leaders of the Illinois Conference who achieved great things for God and were influential in the founding of Mac-Murray College. John Wesley once exclaimed, "Give me a hundred men who love only God and fear nothing but sin and I will shake the world." Wesley got his complement of men, the world became their parish, and the

THE MESSIAH MESSENGER

Official Publication of The Church of the Messiah, Los Angeles

MINISTER: REV. REYNOLD B. BODEN

Editor of the Messenger, Mrs. Palmer H. Cook

VOL. 21

FEBRUARY 9, 1947

No. 24

FROM THE STUDY CHAIR

1 1

At the Annual Meeting, I hinted that I might be taking most of my summer vacation early this winter for the purpose of going East for a special refresher course. Plans have now suddenly developed and I am leaving on February 10th to be gone three or four Sundays. I am happy to state that my predecessor here, Dr. Edward D. Gaylord, has readily consented to preach for us on the next two Sundays and will come in from Claremont for that purpose. My friend, the Reverend James H. More, of the Plymouth Congregational Church, has graciously consented to be responsible for any necessary pastoral work in my absence. You may telephone him directly at AX. 1-5364, or you may reach him through Mrs. McIlvaine in our church office. Don't fail to call on him in case of need. Meanwhile, I shall miss you all; but I shall keep in close touch and you will hear of my movements through the Messenger. Now I must get out my overcoat, rescue it from the moths, clean it up and be prepared for one hundred degrees below. I am going for mental and intellectual stimulation; I hope I shall not freeze in the process.

R.B.B.

GUILD PROGRAM

1 1

Mrs. Thomas G. Wight, President of the Fellowship of Congregational Women of Southern California and the Southwest, and Miss Dorothy Winslow, a member of the Board of Home Missions from this area, have been in Cleveland attending the Midwinter Meeting of Women State Presidents and Denominational Boards. Enroute home they have visited Pleasant Hill Academy, Fisk University, and Dillard University at various places in the south. They will give us a first-hand account of their experiences and impressions, and bring us up to date on the doings of our denomination.

LAYMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

1 1

Dr. Walter A. Graham, Executive Director of National Congregational Laymen's Fellowship, is making a Conference Tour in the south-western part of our country in February, 1947. The only day and place in Los Angeles where Dr. Graham will meet the laymen of our Congregational Church Conference will be on February 27th at the First Congregational Church.

From 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Dr. Graham will hold informal discussions with the laymen relative to men's work in the Church. Laymen are urged to attend this meeting, and have supper on February 27th with others attending the Conference. Following the supper, Dr. Graham will give the closing address.

Laymen of the Church of the Messiah must advise W. T. Knowlton on or before February 21st, if they wish supper reservations on February 27th.

W. T. Knowlton—Keyman for Church of the Messiah, 1632 So. Van Ness Ave., Zone 6, PA. 1447.

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TO OUR VISITORS

1 1

If you are a stranger here and would like to meet new friends, please do not leave without making yourself known to one of the ushers or introducing yourself to Mr. Boden after the service. We try to greet all newcomers, but it is not always possible to recognize them as such. Remember, it takes two to make a smile complete.

MR. BODEN'S SUBJECT:
"THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS
NOW CLOSED"



Race Relations Sunday

Of all things beautiful and good,
The kingliest is brotherhood;
For it will bring again to earth
Her long lost poesy and mirth;
And till it comes these men are slaves,
And travel downward to the dust of
graves.

Clear the way, then, clear the way;
Blind creeds and kings have had their
day.
Break the dead branches from the path;
Our hope is in the aftermath.
To this event the ages ran:
Make way for brotherhood—make way
for man.

Edwin Markham

Our Democratic Fellowship

Yes, there are Congregational Christians who never saw the Mayflower! Of course, the major portion of our Fellowship is Anglo-Saxon white stock.

But—seventeen varieties of racial and nationality aggregates, organized as churches and listed as such in our *Year Book*, are full-fledged members of our denomination. . . .

Armenian, Assyrian, Chinese, Czecho-Slovakian, Danish, Filipino, Finnish, French, German, Hawaiian, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Mexican, Negro, Norwegian, Puerto Rican, Swedish and Welsh.

Thomas A. Tripp

They Say It in Action

They were gathered outside one of our little Indian churches in North Dakota—two hundred of them. It was a memorial service for three of their finest young men who would never sit with them in the circle again. In different war theatres, they had given their lives that just such a thing might go on—a simple service of worship controlled only by the human heart and its God.

"The two mothers and the young wife will serve refreshments to all of us after the memorial service," said one woman to the visitor. Refreshments! They had killed a beef; they had prepared a feast.

The visitor was puzzled. "Why should this be?" she asked. "When the messages of these tragedies came," said her informant, "every Indian in the church went



to each home bearing a gift—some little token of sympathy. Today the three women are saying their 'Thank you' to all who brought gifts. They always say it in action."

Ione Catton

"THIS CERTIFIES

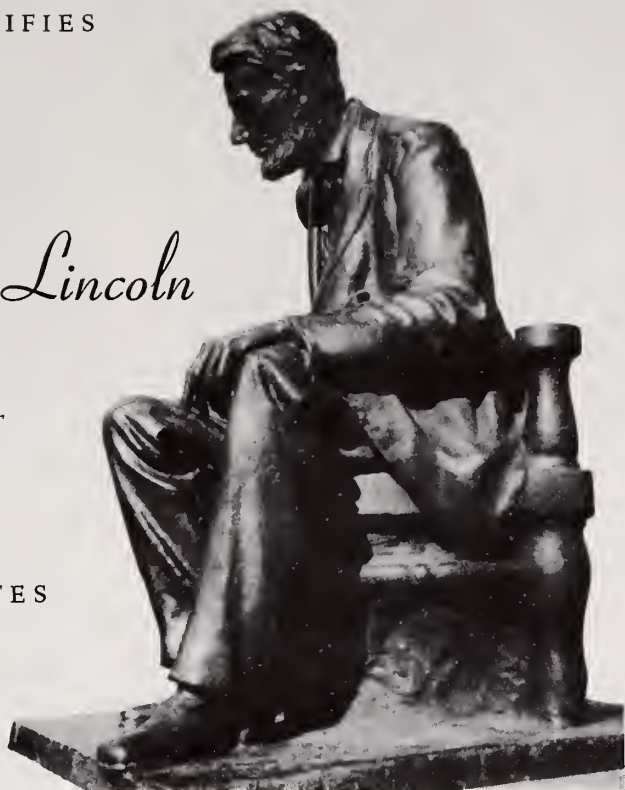
THAT

Abraham Lincoln

PRESIDENT

OF THE

UNITED STATES



... is constituted a life director of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church by the payment of one hundred and fifty dollars.

(Signed) E. S. Janes, President; David Terry, Secretary."



Until the discovery of this certificate, all Lincoln biographers were agreed that the President had never joined a church.

But this certificate of membership, which was recently discovered by William H. Townsend, Lincoln historian, reveals that the President did join a missionary society and was "constituted a life director."

The President's great interest in humanity—and it is well to recall this fact on Race Relations Sunday—did lead him to associate himself with a most practical arm of our churches—missions!

As Edwin Markham put it—"The color of the ground was in him, the red earth, the tang and odor of the primal things—the rectitude and patience of the rocks; the gladness of the wind that shakes the corn; the courage of the bird that dares the sea; the justice of the rain that loves all leaves; the pity of the snow that hides all scars; the loving kindness of the wayside well; the tolerance and equality of light that gives as freely to the shrinking weed as to the great oak flaring to the wind—to the grave's low hill as to the Matterhorn that shoulders out the sky."

SEXAGESIMA

MORNING WORSHIP AT ELEVEN

The Rev. Reynold B. Boden, Preaching

Organ Prelude at 10:45

"Prelude et Cantilene Arioso"Rodgers

"Prelude"Flagler

Processional HymnNo. 71

(The congregation will rise and sing
as the choir enters)

Call to Worship (all standing)

The Doxology (all standing)

Organ Moments

Invocation and Response (all seated)

Organ Moments

Responsive Reading

Solo: "Enough to Know"Elizabeth Ogden
Alice TeeGarden

Scripture

Anthem: "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep
Silent"Arr. Holst
Messiah Chorus

Prayer—Lord's Prayer, Choral Response

Hymn

Sermon:

"This Correspondence Is Now Closed"

Offertory

Response (all standing)No. 426

Prayer

Recessional HymnNo. 251

Benediction

Organ Postlude:

"Fantasia"Sjogren

A Nursery School is held during the church
hour for the convenience of parents with small
children.

TO THE LADIES

Women's voices are urgently needed in
the choir. We are rehearsing now for Easter
and will sing the Brahms "Requiem Mass."
Rehearsals Wednesdays promptly at 7:30.

Published weekly except in July and August by
THE CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH (Congrega-
tional), 2445 West Washington Boulevard, Los
Angeles 7, California. Subscription price 50c a
year. Entered as second-class matter December
27, 1946, at the post office in Los Angeles, under
the Act of March 3, 1879. Return postage guar-
anteed. This Church is a member of the Federal
Council of Churches of Christ in America, and
of the Church Federation of Los Angeles.

WOMEN'S GUILD

Thursday, February 13, 1947

10:30 a.m.—Board meeting. All officers and com-
mittee chairmen please be present.

11:00 a.m.—Business meeting.

12:00 noon—Luncheon, served by Circle VII, Mrs.
W. R. Forker, Leader.

1:00 p.m.—Devotions, Mr. Boden.

1:15 p.m.—Pianist, Mr. Earle C. Voorhies, in-
structor at the Los Angeles Conservatory of
Music. Speakers: Mrs. Thomas Wight and
Miss Dorothy Winslow.

MISCELLANY

The flowers this morning are the gift of Circle
II, Mrs. Mary Keitel, Leader.

The Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday
next at 7:45 p.m. in Mr. Boden's study.

It was announced at the Annual Meeting that
in addition to our Benevolence apportionment for
the Southern California Conference and our na-
tional boards, the sum of \$217.80 was raised for
War Victims and Reconstruction, and \$288.85 for
the Unit Plan which guarantees a pension of
\$500, a year to our older retired ministers.

The next meeting of the Prudential Committee
will be held on Tuesday, February 18, Mr. Will
R. Forker, Moderator.

The Board of Religious Education will meet at
the home of Mrs. Palmer H. Cook, 2179 West
21st St., on Friday evening, February 14th, at
7:45 p.m.

Circle VII will handle your subscription or re-
newal for ANY magazine. Don't let your sub-
scriptions expire. Call Mrs. Will R. Forker, PA.
6050.

PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

The Pilgrims will meet at the church this eve-
ning promptly at 7 p.m. A speaker from the
Lincoln Memorial Church will discuss "Inter-
racial Relations."

Until the Junior Pilgrim Fellowship can be
organized, the Junior High P.F.ers will meet with
the Senior P. F. Everyone of High School and
Junior High School age is invited to attend any
and all of the P. F. meetings. For further in-
formation, call Bill Miles, RO. 5046.

Last Sunday a very interesting talk was given
on the Palestine question by Mr. Ed. Savat.

YOUNG ADULTS OF MESSIAH

I was at Bikini! Hear Mr. Paul Alpine, ex-
Naval Officer, on the lighter incidents of Oper-
ation Cross-roads. The Young Adults are featur-
ing a supper with Spanish food, 7:30 p.m. Sun-
day, Feb. 9, 1947.

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 1401

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

February 13, 1956

LINCOLN—A COSMOPOLITAN CHRISTIAN

The beginning of the Lenten season invites a review of some of the religious bodies with which the Lincoln family came in contact. It is well known that Abraham Lincoln was not a member of any church group, yet he was a man of profound faith in God. It is the purpose of this monograph to arrange chronologically a compilation of testimonies in which various denominations have set forth their claims of having influenced Lincoln at some time in his life. A summary of these allegations might allow us to think of Lincoln as a cosmopolitan Christian.

QUAKER

Lincoln prepared a biographical sketch for John Locke Scripps in which he wrote: "The family (Lincolns) were originally Quakers, though in later times they have fallen away from the peculiar habits of that people." We have not discovered that any of Lincoln's direct ancestors were members of that body although some of the Pennsylvania Lincolns intermarried with the Quakers. When Herbert Hoover became President the Society of Friends claimed two chief executives, Lincoln and Hoover.

METHODIST

The parents of Lincoln were married by a Methodist clergyman, Jesse Head, and when Thomas Lincoln married his second wife another minister of that church, John L. Rogers, performed the ceremony. When Lincoln became President, the Foundry Methodist Church at Washington, where Lincoln was in attendance on a special occasion, by subscriptions collected at the time, made the President a Life Director of its Missionary Society. The Methodist Bishop Simpson spoke the last eulogy over the body of Lincoln at Springfield, Illinois.

BAPTIST

Lincoln's parents very early affiliated with the Little Mount Separate Baptist Church in Kentucky which was an anti-slavery organization. After the President's death his widow wrote: "My husband's heart was naturally religious, he had often described to me his noble mother—the prayers she offered up for him." During the Indiana days the father Thomas joined Pigeon Baptist Church by letter from Kentucky and his second wife joined by experience. Abraham's sister affiliated with the church about the time of her wedding and it was customary for young people to postpone church membership until establishing a home. Abraham did not marry until he was thirty-three years old.

CATHOLIC

Abraham Lincoln's first school teacher was Zachariah Riney, a member of the Catholic faith. Abe's Aunt Mary Mudd Lincoln and her son also named Abraham, the President's cousin, were also members of that church. A Eucharistic Congress was held in Chicago in 1927 and Cardinal Mudgeleyn according to the press, stated: "When Father St. Cyr came to say mass for Lincoln's stepmother, Mr. Lincoln (Abraham, the President) would prepare the altar himself. Indeed with his own hands Abraham carved out six wooden chairs to be used at the mass." Apparently stepmother was confused with aunt.

DISCIPLES

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lincoln after settling in Illinois affiliated with the Disciples of Christ or Christian Church and they both died members of this church. A reminiscence of Rev. John O. Kane, a well known minister of the Christian Church stated: "I baptised him (Abraham Lincoln) in a creek near Springfield, Illinois. . . . I placed his name on the church book. He lived and died a member of the Church of Christ." (Name does not appear on register.) Dr. Edward Scribner Ames, minister of the University Church of Disciples in Chi-

cago stated in a sermon: "Lincoln could very well be a member of this church. Why not take him in." The following year Dr. Ames unveiled a Lincoln bust and concluded the ceremonies with the statement, "Mr. Lincoln we receive you into the membership and fellowship of this church."

EPISCOPALIAN

An Episcopalian clergyman of Springfield, Illinois, Rev. Charles Dresser officiated at the wedding of Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd. Later Lincoln purchased the rectory from Dr. Dresser and lived in that home during the Springfield years. Approaching the choir in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York there has been prepared in the parapet a series of twenty recesses each representing a century in the Christian era. The niche prepared for the nineteenth century contains a statuette of Abraham Lincoln suggesting that he had contributed most to Christian civilization during that century.

PRESBYTERIAN

Mrs. Abraham Lincoln was a member of the Presbyterian Church at Springfield, Ill. and Mr. Lincoln, although not a formal member, served in different capacities for the church. During the Washington days both Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln attended the New York Ave. Presbyterian Church and rented a pew in the church which now bears a memorial tablet. Mrs. Sydney Lauck, for seventy years a member of the church said on the information of Dr. Gurley, the minister, that Abraham Lincoln "but for the assassin who took his life would have made public profession of his faith in Christ on Easter 1865."

CONGREGATIONALIST

Dr. W. E. Barton, a leading Congregationalist minister, gave an address at Illinois College at Jacksonville, Ill. On the assumption that Ann Rutledge before her death was planning to attend the Jacksonville Female College, and also assuming that Lincoln would have followed her and attended the Illinois College, Dr. Barton ventured this conclusion: "It requires no vivid stretch of the imagination to think of Abraham Lincoln as emerging from Illinois College as a Congregational minister." Dr. Barton further observed that Lincoln's early training "would have made him familiar with the Congregational form of church government."

SPIRITUALIST

The *St. Louis Globe Democrat* on March 31, 1896 in reporting the Progressive Spiritualists Convention at Springfield, Mo. stated that a delegate claimed: "Lincoln, as is well established by history, was a firm believer in Spiritualism as any member of the association." Another delegate commented: "It would hardly be fair to designate Lincoln as a spiritualist, though he is known to have accepted in a general way the truths of our religion." In 1891 Nellie C. Maynard published a 264 page book entitled "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?"

UNITARIAN

The American Unitarian Association issued a leaflet under the caption "He Never Joined a Church" in which it is stated "I think that Lincoln could have been a Unitarian if he had been aware of the freedom of belief, the right of every man to think for himself on matters of religion."

UNIVERSALIST

Dr. Frank O. Hall of New York according to a report of a sermon stated: "We Universalists like to remember that Lincoln believed in the ideals our church stands for. He was a predestinarian, and his Calvinistic faith made him practically a Universalist."

MICHIGAN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE

The Newsmagazine of Michigan Methodists

February
8
1962



ins photo

The
Youthful
Abraham
Lincoln
(Story
page 19)

Lincoln and the Methodists *by Thomas T. Starr*

Lincoln never joined a church, but eleven churches have claims on him. Methodists also have a claim or two on Lincoln; and he must have known a lot about us . . .

Lincoln and the Methodists

God bless the Methodist Church — blessed be God, Who, in this great trial, giveth us the churches.
A. Lincoln

By THOMAS I. STARR

LAST year when the writer penned the Lincoln story for the *Advocate* it was intentionally given a title — “. . . I bid you an affectionate farewell” — which held a “double” meaning.

President-elect Lincoln closed his farewell remarks at Springfield with the sentence and this writer had in mind a similar thought; it was to be *his* last written article for the *Advocate*, or any other publication. After all, with no reference library available, a memory can be drained. And this one is getting thin in spots.

Now, it's a year later and last year's writer, like the late Sir Harry Lauder, is back with you again for another “farewell appearance.”

It came about this way: Christmas brought its avalanche of greeting cards, all sincere, in good taste, and very much appreciated. One card, however, was of a nature which stirred this writer's memory and caused the writing of this present story. It was a folded piece, printed on a blue paper cover stock, flecked with silver specks to give a seasonal atmosphere. The four-line message was

in the unmistakable hand of Abraham Lincoln, followed by his signature. Its opening phrase — as you will read in the smaller illustration, “God bless the Methodist Church. . .,” and the memory of the incident which caused its

writing has brought about this article.

Dr. Louis A. Warren, founder of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, and long the editor of the valuable publication, “Lincoln Lore,” in an issue captioned “The Lincolns and the Methodist Clergy,” revealed that Abraham Lincoln's parents, Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln, were married at an 1806 June wedding by a Methodist preacher, Rev. Jesse Head.

Commencing their married life in Elizabethtown, husband Thomas met and worked as a cabinet maker with Rev. Benjamin . . . who supplemented his meager earnings with cabinet . . . As the only local minister married most of the local young couples, one of which was Daniel . . . and Sarah Bush. The . . . and the Lincolns were acquainted before the Lincoln's daughter Sarah was born, in 1807. Later the Lincolns acquired a farm just below Hodgenville, where their second child, a son, was born on a cold winter night, and named Abraham, after his paternal grandfather.

The order of events of the next

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The Christmas greeting card, mentioned in the article, and reproduced above, overprinted by the headline, is the italicized sentence and signature at the end of President Lincoln's reply to the committee. The original letter is in the Library of Congress, and reproduced on the opposite page is a photostat copy from the Illinois State Library. This photostat, and the cut above, are used through the courtesy of Marion D. Pratt, of that library. Mrs. Pratt was the designer and the sender of the Christmas card which led to the writing of this article. The writer is grateful to Mrs. Pratt for the card, the idea which produced the article, and some of the material that went into it. Mrs. Pratt is the widow of the late Dr. Harry E. Pratt, long-time friend of the writer and one of the foremost of all Lincoln writers and researchers.

Appreciation also to Dr. Louis A. Warren, and to Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, the former and the present director of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, for helpful assistance on this and earlier articles.

decade, before the next Methodist preacher appears in the family history, includes loss of the farm, through a faulty title; moving to a new farm, where another baby boy was born to Thomas and Nancy, and died almost immediately; then the moving of the Lincolns across the Ohio River to Spencer County, Indiana; the death of Nancy and, after a suitable time, the introduction of a new mother into the Lincoln home.

At this point, in the summer of 1819, there is a traditional story that the ten-year-old Abraham sent word to a Methodist minister, back in Kentucky, to come to Indiana, to perform funeral rites over the grave of his dead mother.

In November 1819, Thomas Lincoln, wanting a new mother for his children, Sarah and Abraham, returned to Elizabethtown, quickly courted and was married to the widow, Sarah Bush Johnston, whose sheriff-husband was then deceased. Rev. George L. Rogers, then a Methodist minister in Elizabethtown, and a friend of the Widow Johnston, performed the marriage.

The new Mrs. Lincoln became a beloved stepmother to Abraham Lincoln and his sister Sarah.

It is probable that Lincoln's Methodist stepmother had as great an influence upon him as did his own mother, possibly greater. Some of the Lincoln students still

While it is true that Abraham Lincoln never became a member of any church, the Methodists do have a claim because he asked for membership in a Methodist missionary organization, and contributed materially to its work. That story can come later . . . when the writer may make another "Harry Lauder Farewell Appearance."

argue the matter: to which of his mothers was he referring when he is said to have told Herndon, "All that I am or ever hope to be I owe to my angel mother; blessings on her memory?"

His own mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, had been dead for years; his beloved stepmother was still alive and, in fact, outlived him by several years. True, he spoke of his "angel" mother, yet he is also known to have said that Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln had "been an angel" to him. Take your choice, each in turn was an excellent mother.

Lincoln's early political career cannot be mentioned without the inclusion of a Methodist minister. It was the Rev. Peter Cartwright, a circuit rider and a Jacksonian Democrat, who gave Lincoln the only defeat the young Whig ever received at the voting polls.

Even today, we have sometimes a Methodist minister who mixes his profession with politics; possibly Cartwright was the first one. But Abraham Lincoln cut short his political career. The preacher spent a single term in the Illinois state legislature, but the young Whig was elected for the next four terms. Cartwright never sought that office again, although the two were again together in the political arena when they sought a seat in the nation's 30th Congress. Lincoln won, the Methodist preacher didn't.

Fascinating are the stories that can be told of Peter Cartwright who won a place for himself in the Lincoln story. Fascinating, too, is the fact that years later, after Lincoln's death, when Peter the preacher penned his own autobiography, he never gave Lincoln a mention. Cartwright had a lot to

Gentlemen.

In response to your address, allow me to attest the accuracy of its historical statements; indorse the sentiments it expresses; and thank you, in the nation's name, for the sure promise it gives.

Nobly sustained as the government has been by all the churches. I would utter nothing which might, in the least, appear invidious against any. Yet, without this, it may fairly be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church, not less devoted than the best, is, by its greater numbers, the most important of all. It is no fault in others that the Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to Heaven than any. God bless the Methodist Church—bless all the churches—and blessed be God, Who, in this our great trial, giveth us the churches.

A. Lincoln

May 18. 1864

Next Week in History

By William Cardwell Prout

Feb. 11 (1836)—Birth of Washington Gladden at Pottsgrove, Penn., eloquent Congregational minister, author and civic leader. He wrote the hymns "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee" and "Behold A Sower! From Afar."

Feb. 11 (1847)—Birth of Thomas Alva Edison, inventor, Milan, Ohio.

Feb. 12 (1612)—Birth of the English satirical poet, Samuel Butler, Strensham, Worcestershire, famous for his "Hudibras," designed to ridicule the Puritans.

Feb. 12 (1915)—Death of Fanny Crosby, well-known Methodist poet and hymn writer. Seven of her hymns are in The Methodist Hymnal.

Feb. 13 (1951)—Death of Lloyd Cassel Douglas, Congregational minister and novelist.

Feb. 14 (1546)—Luther preached his last sermon at Eisleben, his birthplace.

Feb. 14 (1892)—Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst (1845-1921) started the overthrow of Tammany Hall by a sermon on the text "Ye are the salt of the earth." As pastor of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, Dr. Parkhurst is credited with beginning the campaign against Tammany Hall. In this sermon, he referred to the New York City administration as "a lying, perjured, rum-soaked, and libidinous lot."

Feb. 15 (1742)—The Bristol Methodist Society was divided into classes of about twelve persons under a class leader. This system was introduced in London on March 25.

Feb. 15 (1881)—Birth of William Warren Sweet in Baldwin, Kansas, Methodist minister and church historian.

Feb. 16 (1562)—Five ships with French Huguenots left France for the New World. They landed on the Florida coast on April 30 and settled in South Carolina, becoming the first Protestant and the first French colony in America. This settlement lasted about two years.

Feb. 16 (1867)—First printing of Sabine Baring-Gould's hymn "Now the Day Is Over" in The Church Times.

Feb. 17 (1816)—Birth of Edward Hopper in New York City, Presbyterian minister, author of the hymn "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me."

Feb. 17 (1876)—Death of Horace Bushnell at Hartford, Conn., Congregational clergyman and writer. His work on "Christian Nurture" is a milestone in Christian Education.

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Lincoln and the Methodists

(Continued from page 5)

write about his bouts with the Devil, but he wrote little about politics and never whispered the name of Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln never belonged to the Methodist Church for the same reason that he was never a formal member of any church; although at least eleven Christian denominations have reasonably valid reasons for their claims upon him. Dr. Warren called him "A cosmopolitan Christian." Of his unqualified and constant reliance upon the Divine Being, especially during the war years, and for some years before, there can be no doubt in the mind of anyone who will read his speeches and writings.

Just as evident, too, was the reliance that Lincoln placed upon prayer. That he was a man who talked often with his God, and went often to Him with problems and petitions, there can be no doubt.

There's the story of the group of ministers (denomination unknown) who, in conference with Lincoln asked that he pray constantly for the Lord "to be on the side of the Union" and thus hasten the defeat of the Rebels. Shocked they were when the President told them that he would never utter a prayer like that. His prayer, he told them, would be that "the Union might always be on the side of the Lord."

Delegations of ministers of various churches called often to counsel with President Abraham Lincoln, as did individual ministers, several of whom became faithful and much relied upon advisers. Among these in particular were the Rev. Phineas D. Gurley of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, and Bishop Matthew Simpson of the Washington Area of the Methodist Church. Both men participated in the Lincoln funeral services in the White House, both rode the funeral train from Washington to Illinois, accompanying the body of the assassinated president, and both delivered funeral orations in Springfield.

Among the official acts of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting in Philadelphia, in 1864, was to prepare, adopt and deliver a written "address" to the President of the United States. Lincoln had held the office for 38 months, 37 of which the nation had been at war.

Obviously written by a committee, the conference took 654 words, many of them multisyllable, to express their confidence in the nation, its leader, and the ultimate outcome of "this cruel and wicked rebellion," to tell the President that they were speaking for "nearly seven thousand ministers and a million members."

"With exultation," the document stated, "we point to the record of our church as having never been tarnished

by disloyalty. She was the first of the churches to express, by a deputation of her most distinguished ministers, the promise of support to the Government of (President) Washington. In her Articles of Religion, she has enjoined loyalty as a duty, and has ever given to the Government her most decided support.

"In this present struggle for the nation's life, many thousands of her members and a large number of her ministers have rushed to arms to maintain the cause of God and humanity. They have sealed their devotion to the country with their blood and on every battle-field of this terrible war."

Quoted are only two of the document's eleven wordy, yet meaningful, paragraphs. Lincoln used two paragraphs of 137 words to make formal answer after he had spent more than an hour in conversation with the five-member committee. The committee included Bishop Ames, Rev. Joseph Cummings, Rev. Granville Moody, Rev. Charles Elliott, and Rev. George Peck.

Wrote President Lincoln to the members of the General Conference:

"Gentlemen: In response to your address, allow me to attest the accuracy of its historical statements, endorse the sentiments it expresses, and thank you, in the nation's name, for the sure promise it gives.

"Nobly sustained as the Government has been by all the churches, I would utter nothing which might in the least appear invidious against any. Yet, without this, it may fairly be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church, not less devoted than the best, is, by its greater numbers, the most important of all. It is no fault to others that the Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to Heaven than any. *God bless the Methodist Church — bless all the churches — and blessed be God, Who, in this our great trial, giveth us the churches.*"

The Youthful Lincoln

This week's cover carries a picture of the statue of a young Abraham Lincoln. It stands at the entrance of the village in which he lived for six years, New Salem, Ill. It shows the Great Emancipator carrying a law book and an axe: the "rail-splitter" and attorney who went on to greatness in the Presidency. The words "with malice toward none" are his words and his epitaph. The nine-foot bronze statue is the work of Sculptor Avard T. Fairbanks, formerly of Ann Arbor.

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METCALFE AND METCALFE

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May 27, 1962

Lincoln National Life Insurance Co.
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Gentlemen:

As you are interested in Lincolniana I felt you might find some value in the enclosed Lincoln Story, found in a letter dated January 21, 1863, written by George Washington Speer, Colonel of the 149th Pennsylvania Volunteer Regiment. The Colonel was in Washington as Provost Marshall of the United States with rank of Major.

This letter is recorded in a

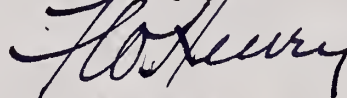
"Memorial to Robert W. Speer"

a copy of which is in our Denver Public Library. Mr. Speer was Mayor of Denver, 1904-1912.

Also the following described book of Lincoln Stories, etc. came into my possession a few days ago. If you are interested and do not have a copy I will gladly mail it to you.

Abraham Lincoln's Stories and Speeches
Edited by J. B. McClure, A.M.
Chicago
Rhodes and McClure Publishing Company
1895
Fully Illustrated

Sincerely yours,



F. W. Henry
1511 Arapahoe Street
Denver 2, Colorado

THE STORY

"Sunday morning at eleven I went to hear Bishop Simpson preach on Missions. The house was densely packed and when President Lincoln came in, he could scarcely get a seat. The Bishop opened my heart for the first time to the importance of missions. After they had raised about \$500.00 and had got about all that appeared could be got, I raised up and stated that I would give \$10.00 toward making Abraham Lincoln a Life Director of the Society if the audience would raise the other \$140.00. Lincoln got up and told the Bishop that he would pay the other, but the audience raised it at once, and such shouting and praying you would hardly think could be tolerated here as was heard for the next ten minutes. The Bishop said it was a noble suggestion of that young officer and Lincoln came and gave me his hand and asked me to call on him often. The meeting broke up at 2:00 P.M."

June 4, 1962

Mr. F. W. Henry
1511 Arapahoe Street
Denver 2, Colorado

Dear Mr. Henry:

I have your letter of May 27 and I want to thank you for the information it contained. I read with interest of the establishment of the fund making Lincoln a life director of the Methodist Mission.

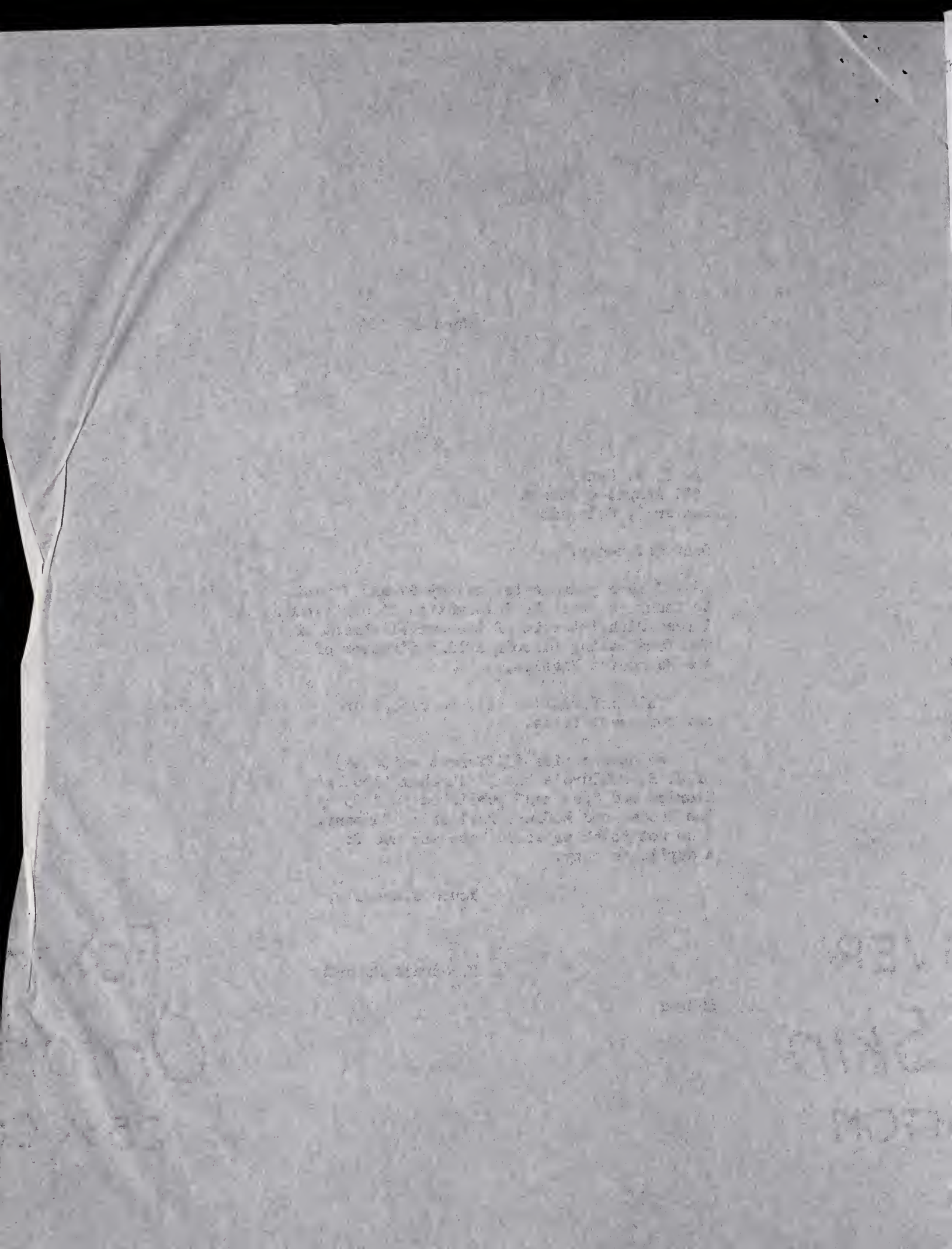
This information will be placed in our permanent files.

We have copies (different editions) of J. B. McClure's book, "Abraham Lincoln's Stories and Speeches" published in 1895 by the Rhodes and McClure Publishing Company. I do not think we would have any use for a duplicate copy.

Yours sincerely,

R. Gerald McMurtry

RGM/md



Lincoln's Church Affiliation

He Was Made Director of Missionary Society

Washington — As we commemorated Lincoln's birthday this past week, millions of Americans rejoiced at the restoration of Ford's Theatre here in Washington where, in 1865, the foul deed ended the life of the Great Emancipator.

Abraham Lincoln, who was so Christ-like in his human qualities, never took the vows of church membership. He was, however, quite faithful in his attendance at services of public worship.

When with fearful responsibilities upon him he came to Washington, he was happy to know that his good friend of Springfield years, the Rev. Dr. Phineas D. Gurley, had come to be the pastor of the New York Av. Presbyterian Church in the capital city. Because of the former association, the President rented a pew in his friend's church and often worshipped there.

Nearby Church

During Lincoln's years in the White House, times that tried men's souls etched deep lines in his brooding face. He felt the need of the spiritual elixir that only worship can bring.

Quite often he would slip into the nearby Foundry Methodist Episcopal Church, then located at 14th and G sts. While attending a service there one Sunday morning, he became a member of the only church organization he ever actually



Dr. Harris

By Dr.
FREDERICK BROWN HARRIS
Chaplain, U. S. Senate

joined. The pastor was another close friend, Bishop Matthew Simpson, one of the most eloquent preachers of the time. It was he, who after the tragic end of the Great Emancipator's life, accompanied Mrs. Lincoln to Illinois and delivered the funeral oration.

Appeal for Missions

When the renowned and prophetic Bishop Simpson came to the Foundry pulpit, Lincoln was a rapt listener. At the service to which reference has been made, the Bishop delivered a stirring missionary sermon. It, of course, had to do with taking the Christian message to the uttermost parts of the earth.

His fellow worshippers noticed that Mr. Lincoln evidently had been greatly affected by the appeal of the preacher. At the close of the sermon an opportunity was given for any present to become a life director of the General Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church by the payment of \$150.00, a rather tidy sum in those days.

One of the church officials arose and suggested that it would be most appropriate if that amount were raised for the purpose of making the President a member if he would consent. At once, several voices were lifted, eager to contribute toward the amount. However, Mr. Lincoln insisted on paying the \$150.00 himself. Then and there he scribbled a note agreeing to become a

member and handed it to the Bishop.

At the Methodist headquarters in New York, a special certificate was prepared and given to Mr. Lincoln. It was inscribed as follows:

"This certifies that His Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, is constituted a life director of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church by the payment of One Hundred and Fifty dollars."

The certificate was hung in a conspicuous place in the Executive Mansion until the time of Mr. Lincoln's death. It was, in fact, on the wall on that fateful night when he left the White House for the Ford Theatre, where his earthly life was to be snuffed out.

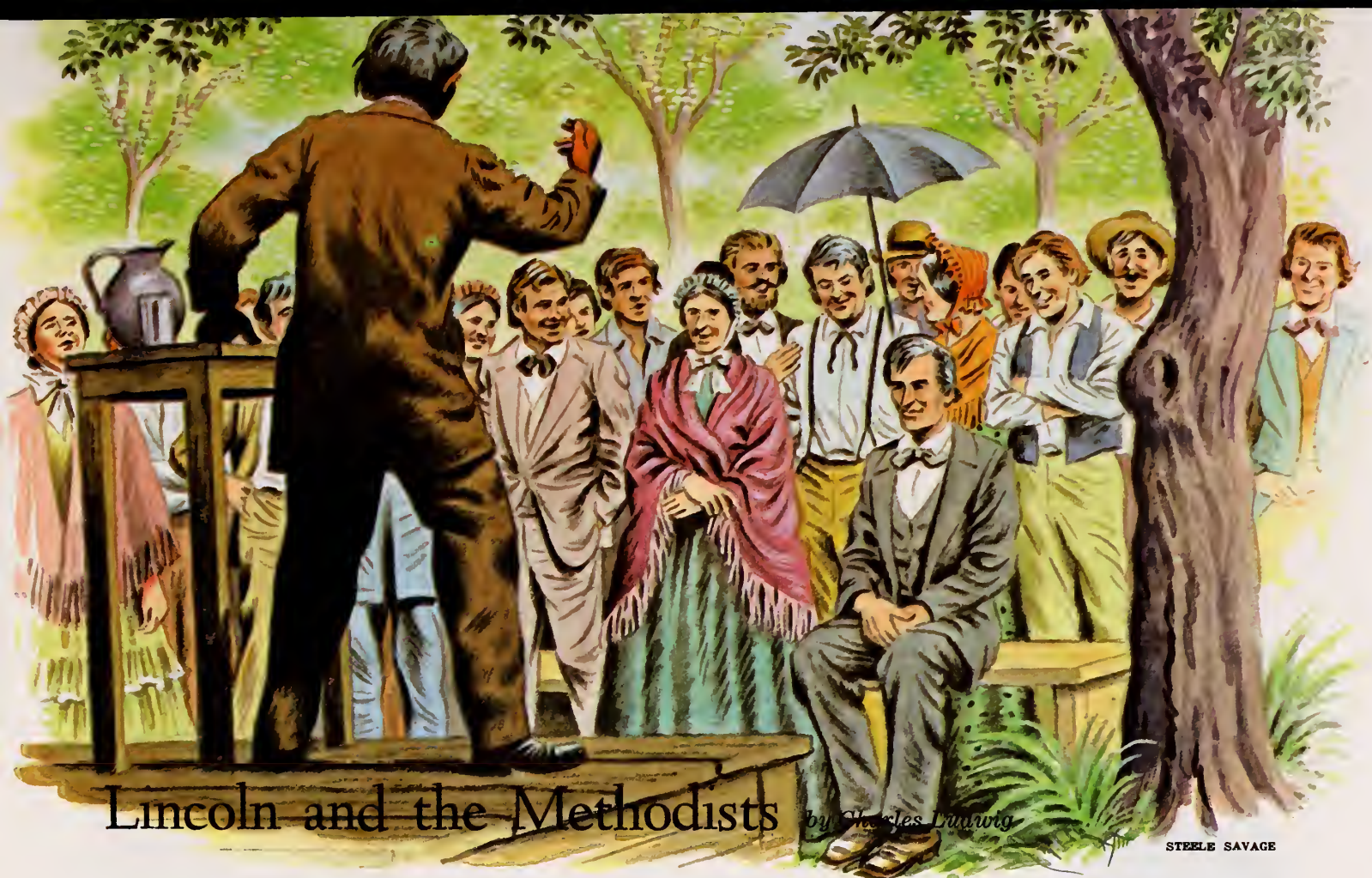
After the assassination the framed document was given to one of his bodyguards, who took it back with him to Illinois.

Put in Attic

For many years after the guard's death, it lay unnoticed in an attic. Sometime after its rediscovery it became a valued part of the Townsend Lincoln Collection in Lexington, Ky.

The owner of that collection, William Townsend, said of this document: "It has been very frequently the chief object of interest of many people who have traveled long distances to see the recorded evidence of Abraham Lincoln's only official connection with a religious association."

Today, the certificate which ties Lincoln to the church and in its original frame, is on permanent display here.



Lincoln and the Methodists

by Charles Ludwig

STEELE SAVAGE

Almost everyone knows that President Lincoln was defeated in one of his races for the Illinois State Legislature by the colorful Methodist circuit rider, Peter Cartwright. What is less known is that after Lincoln was elected president, he voluntarily joined and was made "a life director of the Missionary Society of The Methodist Episcopal Church by the payment of one hundred and fifty dollars."

This is the only religious organization Lincoln ever joined!

While in Washington, the Lincolns attended the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. Nevertheless, the Methodists had a profound influence on his life. The one who gave his funeral oration at Springfield, Illinois, was an old friend, a Methodist bishop, Matthew Simpson.

At the time of Abraham Lincoln's birth near Hodgenville, Kentucky, both his parents, Tom and

Nancy Lincoln, were Baptists. But their marriage ceremony had been performed by a Methodist preacher, red-headed Jesse Head, who also edited a newspaper.

Tom Lincoln, Abe's father, earned his living by farming and doing odd jobs. One of his better skills was that of cabinetmaking. From whom did he learn this? Probably from Benjamin Ogden, a Methodist preacher who lived near the Lincolns at Elizabethtown. A note about him says: "His name was a synonym of courage and suffering. He alone transversed the wilds, swam the rivers, and encountered difficulty and danger." In 1786 Ogden was the only Kentucky preacher listed in the minutes of the conference of The Methodist Church.

Tom Lincoln's name and that of Ogden appear together in many early documents. Ogden performed more marriages than anyone else in that

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FIVE/SIX

A Story Paper for Boys and Girls in Elementary V-VI

Henry M. Bullock Editor, Church School Publications
Edward C. Peterson Editor, Children's Publications
Martha Wagner Editor, FIVE/SIX
Gordon Gullette Layout and Design Director

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Listed in The Methodist Periodical Index.

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part of Kentucky in his day. But like many other preachers of the period, he was forced to earn a part of his living by manual labor. Being a cabinetmaker, he was kept busy at this trade.

On March 13, 1806, he solemnized the wedding of Sarah Bush and the jailor, Daniel Johnston. Years later, after the death of both Nancy Lincoln and Daniel Johnston, Tom Lincoln and Sarah Bush Johnston were married. And once again a Methodist preacher was engaged for the event. The minister this time was George L. Rogers. Thus Abe Lincoln's mother was married by a Methodist preacher, and his stepmother was married on both occasions by Methodist preachers!

In 1832 twenty-three-year-old Abe Lincoln ran for a seat in the Illinois Legislature from Sangamon County. One of the other contenders was the famous Methodist evangelist, Peter Cartwright.

Young Abe did not expect to be elected. In one speech he is reported to have said: "I am humble Abraham Lincoln. I have been solicited by my friends to become a candidate for the legislature. My politics are short and sweet, like the old woman's dance. I am in favor of the internal-improvements system and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same."

Cartwright, with the advantage of age, experience, and established reputation, was among those elected; while Lincoln, although number seven among the twelve candidates, was a loser.

Again in 1846 Lincoln and Cartwright were opposing candidates. This time the goal was Congress, and this time Abe wanted desperately to be elected. A famous story has survived the campaign. It seems that during the heat of the contest Lincoln, against the advice of his friends, went to hear the preacher-candidate.

After thumping the pulpit in his customary manner, Cartwright exhorted: "All who desire to lead a new life, to give their hearts to God, and to go to heaven, will stand."

Many of the crowd stood. But Lincoln remained steadfast in his seat like a stack of books.

"Where are you going?" demanded Cartwright.

"I am going to Congress," replied Lincoln. This witty return broke up the meeting.

When the votes were counted, it was learned that Lincoln was a winner by a substantial majority.

After Abe had been elected President, he and his family became regular attendants at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. And the pastor, Dr. Gurley, became a warm friend. Lincoln contributed money to the church and often attended the midweek services. Nevertheless, he

continued to have warm feelings toward the Methodists who had had such an influence for good in the communities of his youth and childhood.

During a Methodist Conference in Philadelphia, some of the clergymen went over to see Lincoln in order to assure him of their support. Afterwards, he wrote them a letter:

"Nobly sustained as the government has been by the churches, I could utter nothing which might, in the least, appear invidious against any. Yet, without this, it may fairly be said that The Methodist Episcopal Church, not less devoted than the best, is by its greater numbers, the most important of all . . . God bless The Methodist Church—bless all the churches—and blessed be God, who, in this our great trial, giveth us the churches. A. Lincoln."

After President Lincoln had listened to Bishop Simpson preach a missionary sermon in the Foundry Methodist Church of Washington, D.C., someone suggested that Lincoln be made a member of the missionary society. And to help pay the fee, a collection of twenty dollars was quickly raised.

Lincoln responded by getting to his feet and addressing the pulpit: "Bishop," he said, his long loose arms extended in a gesture, "this is the first time I was ever put on the block—here is my money, take me down."

The exact date of this affair is not known, but the certificate proving that it is true was published in *The Christian Advocate* on May 27, 1915.

From various scattered sources it seems that Lincoln was made a "Life Member" in 1861 through the payment of twenty dollars; and a "Life Director" in 1863 by the payment of one hundred fifty dollars.

Bishop Simpson was the one who was given the honor of preaching the final funeral rites for Lincoln at Springfield. In his eulogy, which dwelt on the President's character, the Methodist bishop included these words: "His career teaches young men that every position of eminence is open before the diligent and worthy. To the active men of the country, his example is an incentive to trust in God and do right."

Although he never joined a church, Lincoln was a firm believer in Jesus Christ and the Christian message. A document in the Garrett Theological School quotes Lincoln as saying: "When I became President I did not love Him; when God took my son I was greatly impressed, but still I did not love Him; but when I stood upon the battlefield of Gettysburg I gave my heart to Christ, and I can now say that I do love my Savior."

Other fragments of evidence seem to confirm this statement. ■

HIS ALMOST CHOSEN PEOPLE

When Abraham Lincoln was on his way to his inauguration as President he stopped, among many other places, in Trenton, New Jersey and made a brief speech to the State Senate. The geographical locale, on which some of the important fighting of the Revolution occurred, reminded him of the reading he had done as a boy about that struggle and the crisis he faced, and he said:

I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that those men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that the thing which they struggled for... --this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be an humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this, his almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle.

What did he mean by that striking phrase, "his almost chosen people"? Clearly it is a reflection of his familiarity with the Old Testament idea that the Jews were a chosen people, an idea taken over by the Christians who thought of themselves as a new Israel, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Peter 2:9). Yet he certainly did not mean it in the narrow, jingoistic, chauvinistic sense that most Jews and Christians have taken it to mean. Maybe he put in that word "almost" as a guard against that very meaning; maybe he meant we had a chance to be something greater than we had ever been.

Historians are pretty well agreed on the main events in Lincoln's own personal religious odyssey. His parents were Baptists but he was not. As a boy he enjoyed making fun of the hell-fire and brimstone preaching of the raw frontier. As a young man he was a deist more than anything else. But, as a cure for his depression after breaking his first engagement to Mary Todd, a friend gave him a Bible and he became a regular reader of it. After the death in Illinois of their son Eddie Baker Lincoln, his wife became a Presbyterian and he rented a pew and often attended services, but refused to join; he also acquired a devotional book which he apparently carried with him. In Washington he attended the Presbyterian Church but did not join, and after the death of Willie at about the time of Gettysburg his religion seemed visibly to deepen. Admittedly there are paradoxes to it: never fully orthodox but nevertheless increasingly profound; his religion was "always utterly private and personal" and yet it found expression in public documents and speeches and was a decisive factor in his decision to publish the Emancipation Proclamation. And, as the Second Inaugural shows, it was only on a theological basis that he could understand the war at all.

Lincoln's religion is of interest to us not merely because we celebrate his birthday tomorrow nor because Lincoln in some ways is "the spiritual center of American history," but because his effort to probe beyond the seemingly incoherent and tangled stream of national events in his time can be a model to help us in trying to understand our own times. So let us give some thought to what he might say to us about the maelstrom of events which swirls around us. How would he understand what is happening in Iran, with all its inhumanity and appeals to the divine on both sides? What would he say about the blacks and whites in Rhodesia, both those in power and those fighting as guerillas? What would his advice be in facing the Soviets?

I

I think the first thing Lincoln might say to us is that the words of our Declaration of Independence, "all men are created equal," have to be demonstrated continually. In his address at Gettysburg you may remember that he said our nation had been dedicated "to the proposition that all men are created equal."

That word "proposition" is a mathematical term, used in geometry, and means something which needs to be demonstrated. It is not the word that Thomas Jefferson, for example, would have used. He would have said those words are an "axiom," a self-evident truth to be accepted. But for Lincoln "in his maturer years the phrase was a proposition that was in continual process of being demonstrated."

In the early 1850s a political movement which came to be called the "Know Nothing" party spread almost like wildfire across the land. It was composed chiefly of Protestants and it was strongly "pro-American;" it agitated against all foreigners, especially Irish and German immigrants, and their religion. It was composed of secret societies, not unlike some in recent times, and one of whose names, "The Order of the Star Spangled Banner," gives a clue to the type of patriots they were. The whole political scene was in flux--the old line Whigs, to which Lincoln had belonged, were breaking up; abolitionism was on the rise; the Democrats were splitting north and south. Most of Lincoln's old political friends in Springfield were Know Nothings and they appealed strongly even to Mrs. Lincoln. But when a friend in Kentucky asked about Lincoln's own stand he replied,

I am not a Know-Nothing; that is certain... Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring that 'all men are created equal.' We now practically read it 'all men are created equal except negroes.' When the Know-nothings get control, it will read 'all men are created equal, except negroes and foreigners and Catholics.'

You see what was on his mind: the proposition that all men are created equal was being tested and needed fresh demonstration.

It is still being tested; it is still a proposition to be demonstrated, not an axiom to be assumed. It is being tested in our school system; it is being tested in the way women are having to fight for rights, it is being tested in the way we are for human rights in Russia or Cuba but not so outspoken about them in Iran or South Africa. It is being tested in our attitude toward the Moonies or Hare Krishna. It is tested wherever bigotry or prejudice or fear or half-heartedness or privilege reads it with mental reservations or cautiously deems it inexpedient. It is a proposition we have to demonstrate afresh every day.

II

I think a second thing Lincoln might say to us from his own religious perspective is that the unrest, the disorder, the terrible tensions of our time are God's judgment on our evil ways, and his punishment designed to end those evil ways. That was his conclusion about the awful tragedy and misery and cost of the Civil War. He could only understand it, finally, as the just judgment of God upon the evil of slavery and a punishment intended to bring about its removal. It was not a judgment upon the south alone, but also on the north, for the north had prospered on the raw materials that slavery fed into its factories. He argued this publicly in the Second Inaugural Address, but he had come to that conclusion in his own mind at least a year before:

If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope--feverently do we pray--that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsmen's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said,

'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

That is another way of saying that humanity reaps what it sows (Gal 6:7). When one thinks of the oppression and cruelty and arrogance and avarice that Western white nations have shown for three or four hundred years in Asia and Africa and the Middle East, it is not really very surprising that so many Asiatics and Africans and Middle Easterners are not now particularly friendly to us, refuse to listen to economic or any other kind of reason, and that some are blind to the obvious fact that Communist support is only another form of self-serving colonial imperialism.

Pearl Buck was the daughter of a missionary family and grew up in the Orient a couple of generations ago. In her autobiography she told about an incident she observed while traveling on a train in India:

In the compartment next to me was an English captain... When the train stopped, crying beggars and shouting vendors crowded as usual around the windows... trying to earn a few anna to buy food. The Captain... carried a rawhide whip and he ran out upon the platform and beat off the naked Indians with vicious blows... 'How can you be so cruel?' I demanded. 'They have not hurt you, and they are only trying to get a little money. There is no law against that.' He was astonished for a moment, then he shrugged his shoulders. 'Filthy beasts!' Anger came to my aid. 'Someday,' I said, 'other white men and women and children, quite innocent, will suffer for what you are doing now.'

There is little reason to think that that was an isolated incident, but rather only all too typical, and all the good our missionaries and economic aid, and technological assistance, and all the rest has done has not yet obliterated those memories. And what our children will yet reap because of the machinations of the CIA causes one to tremble.

Lincoln would not shrink from the stern estimate that humanity is under judgment in our time; we are reaping what we and our fathers have sown; but he did believe that the purpose of the suffering and turmoil was to reform us, and that the sooner the abuses stopped the sooner the punishing strife would stop also.

III

The third thing, and the most certain I think, that Lincoln might say to us is that God's will is going to prevail. That was a cornerstone in his own thinking. He was raised a predestinarian Baptist and, while he "never became a Baptist... he never ceased to be a predestinarian." He believed with Hamlet that "there is a divinity that shapes our ends." Phrases like "necessity," and "fore ordained," and "destiny," and "Providence" occur over and over again in his writings. So nearly as he could tell both individual and national lives were under a sovereign God's control and therefore moving toward God's own end.

After he issued the preliminary statement of the Emancipation Proclamation he wrote out a private memorandum, intended apparently to help him keep his mind clear and his resolution steady. He was under terrific pressure; abolitionists who should have been pleased groused that it was too little and too late; the stockmarket sagged as businessmen thought it unwise; desertions increased and enlistment slowed, indicating that he might have cut the nerve of the war effort with many; he was on international tightrope--in London he was caricatured with horns and a long tail and the London Times "damned it as 'the wretched makeshift of a pettifogging lawyer.'" The border states regarded it as madness and betrayal, and the Confederacy, of course, found in it a massive reinforcement of its resolve. How did he ever hold steady? In his memorandum he wrote:

The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party,--and yet the human instrumentalities, working as they do, are the best adaptation to effect his purpose. I am almost ready to say that this is probably true--that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere quiet power on the minds of the new contestants, he could have either saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And having begun, he could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds.

God's will is going to prevail. That is worth reminding ourselves regularly in our own tumultuous and uncertain times. If some among us feel that nuclear power plants are a mistake, they will be better able to live with the majority's mistake if they are confident that in the end God's will is going to prevail. If some among us feel that Communism is relentlessly advancing, they will be better able to live with their doubts and have the courage to act openly if they are themselves sure that God's will is going to prevail. By his mere quiet power he could topple Brezhnev or Castro any day, or cause our own collapse. That he does not do so is an indication that he chooses to work through human instrumentalities and that it is entirely possible that his purpose is something beyond the purpose of either East or West.

I close with this. In Lincoln's mind we are God's almost chosen people-- we have a chance of greatness beyond anything we have yet achieved or been given. Let us then continually demonstrate the proposition that all people are created equal! Let us acknowledge the judgment due to us! And let us never doubt that God's will is going to prevail!

c--Dr. Raymond E. Balcomb
1st United Methodist Church
Portland, Or. 97201

2/11/79



Photo by H. Armstrong Roberts



If He Were Here

THE enrollment in the fifteen Methodist Episcopal schools and colleges for Negroes for the school year 1930-31 was 4,471, of which number 2,806 were enrolled in college. The graduates from these schools numbered 785 last spring.

Fifteen schools for Negroes are sponsored by our Board of Education: nine are colleges, three professional schools, two junior colleges, and one a secondary school. They are the principal contribution of our church to the education of the American Negro.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN relied upon Methodists.

The great president said that the Methodist Episcopal Church had sent "more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to heaven for the success of our cause than any other church."

Negro leaders of Methodism point out that 2,000,000 Negroes in the cotton growing sections this year have not even the necessities of life.

All the jobs have gone to white folks or to Negroes with families. There is little work for Negro students who must pay their way.

More than ever this year our fifteen schools and colleges for Negroes and their 4,500 students depend upon your generosity on

Lincoln Sunday, February 14

Lincoln and the Negro race for whom he gave his life still rely upon Methodists.

THE Methodist Episcopal Church during the last sixty years has:

Taught more than 200,000 Negroes of all ages and classes in schools throughout the South, institutions which it has supported, strengthened, and standardized.

Equipped more than 1,600 ministers and leaders of the Church.

Trained 4,500 Negro physicians, surgeons and dentists.

Prepared 13,640 Negro teachers.

There are 22,000 Negro college students in the United States. Methodism is responsible for almost one sixth of this number.

**THE WORLD SERVICE
OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

740 Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois

—The following story about President Lincoln is certainly characteristic. Soon after he went to Washington he attended the Foundry church, occupying a seat within the altar, while Bishop Simpson preached a missionary sermon. After the collection was taken at the close of the sermon, and as the congregation was about to be dismissed, an inexpressible brother rose and proposed to be one of a given number to raise \$100 to make President Lincoln a life director of the missionary society. The proposition was put, and Brothers A, B and C responded glibly. But the inevitable pause finally came. Part of the money was wanting. When the bishop announced, "Who will take the balance?" the pause became slightly impressive. Then the tall form of Lincoln was seen to rise, a long, bony arm was extended imploringly, and he said: "Bishop, this is the first time I have ever been placed upon the auction block. Please let me pay the balance myself, and take me down."

A Lincoln

What Lincoln's Day Means to Methodists

THROUGHOUT the civilized world the 119th anniversary of Lincoln's birth on February 12, will recall in fond memory the life and works of the great emancipator. To Methodists the day will have added significance in that it falls on Sunday. It will be the first time that Lincoln's Sunday coincided with Lincoln's birthday since 1922.

At the close of the Civil War the education and welfare of the Negro became a national problem to the solution of which the churches directed their attention.

The varied experience of religious organizations in mission work was brought to the new task. Many of the problems were new. Time could not be lost in philosophizing about them. There was work to do and the churches went ahead learning as they went.

The contribution of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the enlightenment of the Negro race is now past history. The Negro has learned rapidly to take care of himself but in many places he still needs the guiding hand of those who have been helping him and without whose support his progress would be slow.



Since 1916 Lincoln's Sunday, that Sunday nearest the great emancipator's birthday, has been observed as a day of special emphasis on the work of the church among Negroes—an occasion on which to appraise the progress of a work initiated by the emancipation of the Negro.

The first definite organization in the Methodist Episcopal Church devoted to this enterprise was the Freedmen's Aid Society organized in Trinity Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1866. Two years later the

General Conference which met in Chicago in 1868 commended the work of the society to the Church.

With the passing years the contribution of the Methodist Episcopal Church to Negro welfare has progressed from unrelated missionary activities to a correlated and unified enterprise embracing seventeen schools and colleges with plants totalling \$4,650,000 in value and \$1,700,000 of endowment. The alumni of these institutions number over 16,000.

In this group of schools are five secondary schools and Junior colleges, nine colleges and three professional schools.

LINCOLN AND MISSIONS

A diligent search for a precious certificate is rewarded with success

By ANNA ONSTOTT

DR. FREDERICK BROWN HARRIS, pastor of the Foundry Methodist Church, Washington, D. C., told me, "On one occasion when Bishop Matthew Simpson had preached a missionary sermon in old Foundry Church, the President, Abraham Lincoln, was in the audience. Someone suggested that they make him a life member of the missionary society, and \$20 was quickly raised. Mr. Lincoln arose and, stretching out his long arms, said: 'Bishop, this is the first time I was ever put on the block—here is my money, take me down.'" It was reported he gave \$100. Dr. Harris added, "I would like to have this verified for we do not find either the date or the amount he contributed on our records."

My first inquiry was made of the missionary society in New York City, but no one there could give the answer.

I then consulted Dr. James R. Joy, librarian of the Methodist Historical Society, and he told me that he remembered having seen a print of the Lincoln Certificate in *THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE*. Miss Hattie Hughes and I found it in the paper dated May 27, 1915. Here was the proof that Abraham Lincoln was a life director of the missionary society by the payment of \$150. In a footnote was this interesting item:

Mrs. George F. Sands, of Cincinnati, has an unusual bit of Lincolniana in the form of the Certificate of Life Membership in the Missionary Society issued to President Lincoln. The document is here reproduced by courtesy of the *Western Christian Advocate*.

This gave me a new clue and I wrote Dr. Orien W. Fifer, of *THE ADVOCATE* at Cincinnati. His efforts were rewarded by finding the electrotype used in 1915, but he could find no trace of the owner of the certificate. In *THE ADVOCATE* of October 21, 1937, he asked for information concerning the lost Lincoln Certificate.

On October 27, Mr. William Townsend, of Lexington, Ky., replied that he was the owner of the certificate, and would like to know how and when it was issued. He wrote:

On May 5, 1933, I became the owner of this original certificate and it is now a part of my



President Lincoln's missionary certificate

collection of Lincolniana. Dr. Fifer refers to the certificate as having been owned by, or in the possession of, Mrs. George F. Sands, of Cincinnati, in 1915. This name does not appear in the detailed and sworn-to chain of title which I have, and which includes the badge of the member of the White House guard during Lincoln's time to whom Mrs. Lincoln gave this certificate, and also the discharge of this young soldier from the White House military detail, signed by President Andrew Johnson.

This verified the statement that Abraham Lincoln had been not only a life member of the missionary society but a life director also, and the yearly report should reveal the missing dates.

A search was made in the library of the missionary society, which revealed the following, and is also proof that tradition is not to be relied on for historical facts:

1861, President Abraham Lincoln, Life Member, \$20.

1863, Life Director—Abraham Lincoln, \$150.

—MRS. ABRAHAM LINCOLN.



In the yearly report of 1864, following the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in that year, we no longer find the title "Life Director," but both Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln are now listed under the new title, "Life Manager," which appeared each year until 1882.

In Lexington, Ky., I found the original Lincoln Certificate.

Having with me a facsimile of the print in THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE of May 27, 1915, I compared this with the original, which is in the possession of Mr. Townsend. We agreed that the cut was made from the original certificate.

Thus, we have proof of the closest link in the religious life of Abraham Lincoln with any church.

Sarah Bush, who was to become the stepmother of Lincoln, and when Thomas Lincoln married the widow Sarah Bush Johnston, it was another Methodist minister, George L. Rogers, who performed the ceremony.

When the last rites were pronounced over the body of the martyred Lincoln, it was Bishop Simpson of the Methodist Church who delivered the final eulogy which closed with these words:

"We crown thee as our martyr, and Humanity enthrones thee as her triumphant son. Hero, martyr, friend, farewell."

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The following Lincoln Story was told by Dr. O. F. Bartholow,
Pastor of the First Methodist Church, Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

Dr. Bartholow's parents lived on Green Street, Urbana, Illinois; his Mother still residing in the old family house. Across the street from them has lived for many years Judge Cunningham. He is still living.

Just before the Douglass-Lincoln debates Lincoln came to Urbana on a legal matter and having been long acquainted with Judge Cunningham, who was a much younger man than Lincoln, Cunningham invited him to stay all night at their house. The Judge and his young wife had recently united with the Church and had set up a family altar. They had also pledged each other that they would under no circumstances omit family worship.

The young Judge and his wife held a serious conference in the kitchen as to what they should do in the presence of Mr. Lincoln as a guest.

It was decided that the Judge would explain the whole matter to Mr. Lincoln and proceed as always. When the Judge told Mr. Lincoln about their custom he said, "Would you be willing to read the Scriptures at our family devotions?"

And Mr. Lincoln replied, "I would be more than pleased to do so." He then turned to the 46th Psalm - the Luther Psalm, "God is our refuge and strength", and after having reverently read it, to the great surprise and delight of Judge Cunningham and his wife Abraham Lincoln said, "Let us pray." And he kneeled and prayed and then closed his prayer with, "This we ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior".

Dr. Blakely

--Beverly Hills, Calif, Rot.
Hotel, May 28, 1922
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CONTACTS

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